

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-8 and 10 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by Japanese patent 10-249,898. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully solicited in light of the following remarks.

The effective date of the applied reference as prior art is the publication date of September 22, 1998. However, the present application is entitled to benefit from the August 6, 1998 priority date of International Application No. PCT/JP98/03507. In order to perfect applicant's priority claim, an English translation of the International Application is submitted herewith along with a Declaration that such translation is a true translation. Accordingly, the applied reference is not effective against the present application and must be withdrawn.

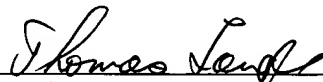
Based on all of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in proper condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable action to this effect and early passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner have any comments, questions, suggestions or objections, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned in order to facilitate reaching a resolution of any such outstanding issues.

Respectfully submitted,

COHEN, PONTANI, LIEBERMAN & PAVANE

By



Thomas Langer, Reg. No. 27,264
551 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1210
New York, New York 10176
(212) 687-2770

Dated: September 20, 2004